belts, all knew the name and number of their regiment and company. When an officer told them where their outfit was, they trudged obediently in that direction.

Reinforcements shifted toward the perimeter held by the 43rd Corps did not change the situation. Time and again the Germans found the weak points in our fluid lines. We were engaged in a large-scale maneuver that required co-ordination and precise timing of movements, flexibility of troops, and bold initiative of commanders. We lacked these qualities.

THE FALL OF RIGA

Boldyrev, Simonov, and I sat around a table covered with maps and half a dozen field telephones. Simonov kept track of operations, Boldyrev sent out orders, I answered the calls of soldiers' representatives, explaining the operation to them. Our aim was to stop or at least slow down the advance of the Germans until heavy guns from other sections of the front could take up positions. Late in the evening the wires went dead again. I fell asleep over a map. Boldyrev covered me with his overcoat.

Before dawn the general awakened me and showed me the new map of the location of the troops. "This is how things look now," he said grimly. "The Germans are making no effort to fan out. They do not intend to attack us from the rear and are not trying to broaden the bulge. But they are building a corridor across our positions, cementing the gap in our lines. Their objective is the highway between Riga and Pskov. If they reach it, they will cut off the right wing of the army." He asked me to drive to Riga and report the situation to the army commander. I replied that military questions were beyond my competence. He waved his big hand. "The operation is in a phase that requires difficult decisions from the army commander. More than purely military decisions, perhaps. Five minutes ago Parsky was on the line. He said he would like to talk with you. Then communication was cut off."

A few minutes later I was in a car speeding toward Riga in the predawn twilight. Confusion on the rear roads was worse than at the front—crowds of soldiers without arms . . . empty vehicles rushing in opposite directions. On the main highway an endless line of heavily loaded trucks moved slowly southward from Riga. Thousands of soldiers were plodding in the same direction. Some were marching in columns, eight men abreast, with officers in the front line; others, in disorderly groups in the fields flanking the road. Technically speaking, this was not a "rout" but a "readjustment" of the front line, yet